



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Jacksonville District

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers urges safety in and around the water

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the nation's leading provider of water-based recreation, is committed to reducing the number of water-related accidents and fatalities at Corps projects. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental deaths nationwide. Statistics show that 90 percent of those who drown at Corps lakes may have survived if only they had worn a life jacket.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers offers the following tips to ensure safety in, on and around the water during the Independence Day holiday weekend and throughout the summer.

Sidebars

Alcohol and water don't mix

More than half of all drowning fatalities involve alcohol. Just one beer can impair balance, vision, judgment and reflexes. Research shows that four hours of boating, exposure to noise, vibration, sun, glare and wind produces fatigue that simulates intoxication. Boating fatigue, combined with alcohol consumption, intensifies these effects and increases accident risk.

Boating safety

- Know your boat and know the rules of safe boating.
- Take a safe boating course. Visit <http://www.cgaux.org> for information.
- View the Coast Guard federal regulations governing boating at <http://www.uscgboating.org> and know your state laws as well.
- Carry a set of navigational charts on board.
- Check your boat for all required safety equipment. Visit <http://www.cgaux.org> for guidance on performing your own safety inspection and for locations

where you can have your vessel inspected, free of charge, by the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

- Don't overload your boat: consider boat size, the number of passengers and extra equipment before setting out.
- Follow the manufacturer's suggested procedures before starting the engine.
- Wear a life jacket – don't just carry one on board. Make sure it is US Coast Guard-approved and appropriately sized.
- Coast Guard law now requires life jackets for all children age 12 and under, unless otherwise specified by state law. Know your state law!
- Check the weather forecast before setting out.
- File a float plan with family or friends who are not on the vessel.

Learn to swim

Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental deaths between the ages of 15 and 44. Surprisingly, two-thirds of those who drown never had any intention of going into the water.

- Watch your children at all times when in or near the water.
- Never dive or jump into unknown waters.
- Never rely on toys such as inner tubes and water wings to stay afloat.
- Don't take chances by over-estimating your swimming skills.
- Reach or throw a flotation device to help someone in trouble. Don't go into the water yourself.
- Swim only in designated swimming areas.
- Never swim alone.

Please make your visit to any recreation area a safe and enjoyable one. Taking simple water safety precautions saves lives.

For additional water safety tips, visit the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers water safety web site at <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil>. Children will enjoy visiting Bobber the Water Safety Dog at <http://bobber.info>.

For further information about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, please visit our web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil or call the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-2236.

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GRAPHICS AND PHOTO FOLLOW



